A True and Perfect Relation of the New Invented Way
OF
Perſecuting the Proteſtants in FRANCE.
TOGETHER
With the Manner, Time and Place, when and where it firſt begun to Act: As alſo an Exact Account after what manner it is purſued contrary to the Priviledges granted to them by King *Henry* the 4th. *Lewis* the 13th. and this King now Reigning; *viz.*

BY the Edict of *Nantz*, on the 6th general Article, and the firſt particular Act, Liberty of Conſcience, without Lett or Moleſtation, is there moſt expreſly promiſed to all Proteſtants that were then, or ſhould be hereafter; and by the 7th general Act is granted full Exerciſe of the Proteſtant Religion, and to ſeveral Noblemen Liberty to Preach in their houſes, and to have Churches in their Burroughs. By the 37th Article it is ſaid, That all the Proteſtants ſhall enjoy all Offices and Honours in all places of the King's Territories; and that they ſhall be no more charged nor oppreſſed with Impoſitions ordinary or extraordinary, than the Catholicks, and in order thereunto it is ſaid in the 30, 31, and 57 Acts, that the Proteſtants ſhall aſſiſt as Judges in the Parliaments, & Chambers as Demy-parties; that is to ſay, half Papiſt, and half Proteſtants to Judge, without Appeal, of all Differences that they might have with their fellow-ſubjects. *Lewis* the 13th confirmed it by his Declaration of the 22th of *May* 1610. This King hath alſo aſſured all Europe, by ſeveral Authentick Declarations, that he would maintain the Edict of *Nants*, according to the deſire of his Grandfather, who had made it an irrevocable Law, in regard of the faithful Service they did tender to the Crown, having teſtified an inviolable Loyalty to him in all his troubles, it is notorious to all the world, that they have freely ſpent their Lives and Fortunes to defend him, and have continued the ſame for this King againſt the Prince of *Conde*, and all his Enemies. Notwithſtanding all that, the ſaid King hath taken away all the Civil Offices from the Proteſtants, by a Declaration of the 6th of *November* 1679. and of the 23d of *Auguſt* 1680. The 20th of *November* 1679. it is ordered by a Declaration, That there ſhall be no Synod without the King's leave, and without a Papiſt Commiſſary. *March* 1679. The 13th day a Declaration forbidding them that are turned Papiſts ever to turn Proteſtants again, upon Confiſcation of their Eſtates, and other Penalties. 1680. *June* 25. Another Declaration, forbidding Papiſts to turn Proteſtants 1680. *Auguſt* the 27th. Another Declaration forbidding Proteſtants to have any Concern in His Majeſties Farms, or any other Offices. 1680. *Novemb.* 18. The King hath Ordered, that Accounts ſhould be given of the Money that hath been gathered in the Proteſtant Churches, ſince the year 1670. they not knowing his deſign. At the ſame time another Declaration which ſaith, *That any Proteſtant that will turn Papiſt, ſhall not be compelled to pay any Debts during three years*; which is for ever; *nor ſhall they have any increaſe in their Taxes.* 1680. *Decemb.* 2. Another Declaration which orders the Juſtices to viſit the Sick; and the ſaid Juſtices turn all the people out of their houſes, and ſay what they pleaſe to the Sick, and ſo report that he will die a Catholick; and if he dieth, they take their Children, and their Eſtates; ſo bring them up as they pleaſe. 1681. *April* 11. A Gratification is publiſhed for them that will turn Papiſts, ſaying, *They ſhall have no Charge of Souldiers during two years, nor pay any Contribution.* 1681. *May* 3. It is forbidden by another Declaration, to all Proteſt. Trades-men, to take any Apprentice Proteſtant nor Papiſt. 1681. *July* 8. A Declaration that giveth leave to all Children ſeven years old, to turn Papiſts againſt their Parents will. 1681. *July* 4. An Order to proceed againſt the Miniſters, which did not give a right Explication to the King's Declaration of the 19th of *May* laſt. Several Colledges have been aboliſhed; and it is not ſuffered to have any Schoolmaſters, but where there is Churches, and but one in every place. 1681. *July* 9. The King did order there ſhould be no more Academy at *Sedan*. 1680. *Feb.* 20. The Proteſtant Midwives are forbidden to make uſe any more of their Employments. 1681. *Novemb.* 4. A Declaration by which it is ordered, That whereas ſeveral Churches have been demoliſhed, and ſeveral Miniſters of thoſe places have gone to other Churches to Preach, His Majeſty, to leſſen the number, hath declared, That Synods ſhould not ſend any ſuch Miniſters to Preach; and that there ſhould be no more Miniſters in the Churches that remain, than there was before the Laſt Synod.

AT *Poictiers*, the Chief City of *Poictou*, ſeveral Prieſts and other Perſons were appointed to go to ſeveral Proteſtants houſes to offer them Corn and Money if they were willing to go to Maſs: ſome did accept of it, others did not, according to their bargain they were paid, and ſo turned Papiſts: this continued about 3 weeks; then they ſet out Proclamations that ſuch People that would go to Maſs, might come to ſuch places, there they ſhould be very well entertained with money. Several People did ſcorn their proffers, others did lay hold of them; this laſted 3 weeks more, and the People that imployed themſelves about ſuch work, had a Crown for their pains, of as many Perſons as they got.

In *April* the Biſhop of *Poictiers* took a Journey through all his Dioceſs, and in every place he went, cauſed all the people that were Proteſtants to come to him, telling them that the Kings intent was to have all his *Subjects* Papiſts, their beſt was to do it in time, and that he had order to give them money. I ſhall here mark the anſwer of a Countrey fellow, called *Peter Fouet* of *Kouvres*, who ſaid, truly my Lord, when I go to a market to Exchange a Horſe, if I give Boot, it is becauſe I would have a beter than mine; therefore I think my Religion better than yours, becauſe you give money to Boot. However, many did take money and left their Religion; the ſaid Biſhop uſing many words and promiſes to them, beſide the money he gave. About the Latter end of *May* the Intendant of that Province took a Journey in moſt places where there were Proteſtants. He did ſend for the people, as the Biſhop had done before, but was very harſh to them, ſaying, they muſt go to Maſs, if they did not, their houſes ſhould be well furniſh'd with Souldiers: ſome did ſcorn his proffers and threats, others did turn. At the beginning of *June* there went a Company of Troupers to a place called *Melle*; they all Lodged at the Proteſtants houſes, and utterly ruined them, cauſing the Inhabitants to find abundance of proviſions more than they needed, making great ſpoil with Dogs and Horſes and Money every morning, ſome 20, 30, 40, Livres of their Landlord; they had Feather-beds and clean Linnen carried into ſtables to lay their Horſes upon. At the ſame time a Company of Troupers went to a great Burrough called *Exoudun*, acting the ſame thing: ſome changed, others abſented themſelves. At the ſame time they went to a place called *Eſchiré*; the Lord of that place is a Proteſtant, *Monſieur De La Taillée*: They did proceed as in the places aforeſaid; the people did ſubmit as long as they had moneys in hopes it would not laſt long. But being no more able to entertain them at ſuch Rates, ſome did forſake their houſes, others did turn; then they took to Ride up and down in every Village, thereabouts, in ſeveral Proteſtant houſes acting the ſame. The Lord of *Baiſrogen* gave a viſit to the Intendant, making complaints of the *Souldiers* misbehaviours; his Anſwer was to him, That his Burrough ſhould have a ſhare; the ſaid Lord told him, none ſhould Lodge there without the King's ſpecial order; the Intendant obtained the ſame, and withall, to take him Priſoner, which was Executed and he was carried to *Bourdeaux* in *Chartean Trumpette*, where he is, ſtill and the Souldiers did utterly ruine the Place; then they went to *Chernoux*, and St. *Gallais*, the Lords of them places are Papiſts, and there acted as before in Proteſtant houſes only. They went alſo to St. *Maxire* to *Villiers*, to *Murſay*, and to a place called *Bennet*, ſix miles diſtant from *Niort*, drawing towards Low *Poictou*; there the People after great ſufferings, fled into the Fields, and hid themſelves night and day; the Souldiers having notice of it by ſome Papiſt, hunted them poor People with Dogs, miſuſed them, and brought them to their houſes again; ſome did turn, others reſiſted. In *July* they went to St. *Elemoy* to *Panpron*, to *Sanſay*, to *Bagneau*, and *Chenay*, there acting the ſame things. They were alſo at a conſiderable Town called *Luſignan*, there dealing as wickedly as in other places; then they came round about St. *Maixant*, in all the Burroughs joyning the Gates, acting the ſame Cruelties, but went not into the Town. They went alſo at *Aigonnay* and *Cheſbontonne*, and other places which I name not here. Several Gentlemen were appointed to go to *Paris*, to acquaint the King of thoſe wicked proceedings, (the Marquis of *Vonours* and his Son, who have been great ſufferers for ſpeaking the truth to the King: the reſt of the Deputies were ſent to the Marquis of *Rivigny*, not being admitted to ſpeak to the King.) The Governour of *Poictou* called the *Duke La Vieu Villes*, was ordered to go in his Government, and there to hear the Complaints of all them that were moleſted; upon that the ſaid Proteſtants did rejoyce at the Governours Arrival. Several Complaints made to him, his Anſwer was, he could not believe there was ſo much miſchief done, and that in few daies he would ſee Mon. *Marilac* Intendant; when they had ſpoken together, the Intendant did ſend eight Souldiers where there was but four before, and ſo jeſted, and asked if they had not good Juſtice of the Governour.

In *July* the Biſhop of *Lucon* gave the Governour a Viſit; after that the Governour did

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send his Guards, seven, or eight at a time in a house, dealing as wickedly with the People in the Low *Poitou* as the Dragoons had done in other places; this lasted about a month, then the Bishop of *Lucon* had a Jubile, he imployed himself to draw the People to him: After that the Souldiers did return again to *Benet*, they finding neither Money nor Victuals in the Houses of the People that was returned; they thinking the business over (the Souldiers misused them, and caused many to turn,) the Souldier finding nothing to feed themselves at the Houses of them that persisted did repair to the Chief Commanders to acquaint them of the same, desiring other Quarters; their answer was, That as long as there was any Moveables in their Houses, they should have no other quarters, but should sell it all for their subsistence. At a place called *Champdenie*, a Market-town, many Families did forsake their houses, and carried away the best goods they had, having notice the Souldiers were to come there; whereupon the Intendant did proclaim, That all the Inhabitants of that Province, that had absented themselves for fear of lodging Souldiers, should forthwith return to their houses upon the Penalty of five hundred Livres; but very few did obey.

In *August* the Souldiers had Liberty to go where they pleased, except in the Cities; and had no other Orders but a Bill from the Priests of every Parish, in which was written, such a man is an Huguenot, and so there lodged at discretion, that did occasion many Labouring men to fly, and several did forsake their Corn in the Fields, which never was cut down, but destroyed. They did take some Peazants, and burnt their wooden Shooes, their feet being therein. *James Paron* did suffer this, and did not change his Religion. The Officers that are committed for the Taxes, called *Elus*, went about in every Parish to take a List of what Protestants remained; also an account of what means they had, to the end and purpose, as I shall tell hereafter in the New Way of Persecuting.

In *September* the Souldiers went to *Parsenay*, and the neighbouring Places; and because the People began to run away at their coming, they went no more in the day, but in the night, and so did Catch the People in their houses, and keep them in torments until they Changed, or made their Escape. In the same month went a Company to a place called *La Motte*; the Lord of it is called *Count Parabelle*, a Papist; they surprized the Protestants in their houses; that place was thought full of Religious people, and that would sooner have lost their Estates, than their Religion, but it proved otherwise; they stood but three daies, except twenty that absented themselves: They did also great Cruelties at *Coulonge*; then the Souldiers took their March, where they had been before to see if any were returned, and so continued their wickedness, which occasioned many to turn and them that would not, did forsake the Kingdom.

The Priests all the Kingdom over, did forbid the People to buy any Goods of the Protestants, so that if any was sold, it was by stealth; laying upon the Buyers a great Charge, saying, These People have no Religion, their Means are their Gods; to save them they will turn to us; and the want of Money will keep them here; but if they have Money, they will return into the Hereticks Country; and you that buy such Goods must needs be damned, and suffer double pains, because you are a help or instrument to convey those People from the true Faith; upon that all manner of Goods were cheap; but several of them did buy secretly such Goods as they did forbid others to buy. The Magistrates of every place did also forbid to buy any thing of the Protestants upon great penalties. From *Niort* a great Town in the said Province, several Gentlemen, Women, and Children shipped themselves upon the River of *Maran*; the Magistrates of that place having notice of the same, Commanded some Souldiers to follow them, and they were taken at a place called *La Rousselle*, & plundered; they did undress the Women & Children, & found Gold hid in their young Babes clouts, and elsewhere, amounting to considerable Sums, and carried them back at *Niort*, the Men put in Prison, the Women and Children at the Hospital: Complaint being made to the Intendant, he ordered, that if they would not turn, they should remain there until they had spent their mony at the rate of six pence *per* day for every Person, at several places the Souldiers made people sit up night and day, without sleeping, taking by turn, drinking, and eating, making the People of the House continually to wait upon them, and so caused the death of many. They have carried old People in sheets to Church, & there made them say that they were Roman Catholicks, & if they recanted, to be hanged, as Apostates. They have beaten many, & drawn about the streets by the hair: If a Papist oweth to a Protestant Monies upon a petition, supposing the Protestant intends to withdraw himself, the Papist shall obtain daley at his pleasure. A very great volume might be made of all their Cruelties; the People being thus perplexed, begun in *July* to draw towards *Rochelle*, to seek a retreit into the *Protestant Princes Countries*, in *England* chiefly, under the Right Defender of

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the Faith. The People were suffered at first to ship themselves with what Goods they had to carry; it lasted so until *September*, then they did hinder them to carry any thing, the Customers were forbidden to clear any manner of Houshold-stuff; but the People were suffered to go in quiet, provided they carried nothing, not so much as a Bed or Covering; that lasted until the middle of *Octob.* Then one Mr. *Thomas Tailer* of *Southampton* was stopt within the *Digue* at *Rochelle*, with 200 Passengers, pretending to confiscate his Ship, by reason of his Shipping of them; the Ship was brought in the Harbour, and a Messenger sent to the Intendant of *Rochefort*, which did nothing in it, but said he would write to Court; in the mean time a Merchant of *Rochelle* arrested the Goods that were aboard, belonging to one Mr. *Mesnire Frighter*, to which he was indebted, but the said *Tailer* hath since been absolutely cleared of his pretended Crime.

The New Way of Persecution.

THE Officers for the Taxes called *Elus*, having informed the Intendant of every man's faculty, he at his discretion layeth Taxes upon the Protestants; several that have not three hundred Livres *per annum*, are Taxed at a thousand Livres; and the whole Taxes of a Town are joyntly and severally upon the Inhabitants, so that they may take one man for the whole payment, and let him recover it when he can, and that in regard of Protestants only. They have imprisoned several Ministers.

They take review of all the process that hath been made within this 25 years, and if they find any considerable, wherein a Protestant hath had the best of it, they recal it, and say, there was a mistake, and that it must be Examined anew by the Intendant, and so cast the poor Protestant, unless he will turn Papist. By a Proclamation set forth by the Intendant of *Rochefort*, it was said that no ships should undertake to transport any of the Kings Subjects, upon Penalty of 3000 Livres, and Officers set out to lay hold of all the *Protestants* that had left their houses, calling them deserters, and several hundred taken prisoners, which after many Sufferings have been let out; but having their liberty, they did their endeavour to ship themselves, which several have done in the night. The second of *December* there was a *Scotch* ship that took in about 100 passengers; at the last Boats coming off from a place called *Point of Minisme* near the *Digue* at *Rochel*, there came several armed men who Commanded the boat to return one the shore, and bring the people again, upon denial they did discharge their Musquets and shot one man thorow the body, belonging to Mr. *Martin* (sloop) of *La Flotte*; and wounded another in the head, belonging to St. *Martins* in the *Isle of Re*. These wicked Papists are so malicious, and inhumane, that they are not contented with all the sufferings that they have had in *France*, they follow them in *England*; they have acted, and do act every day many unhandsome tricks, and strive to put it upon them, that they may be odious to the People of *England*, to draw back their Charity from them. Therefore it is no wonder at the Peoples coming so poor into this Country; considering how they are persecuted, the Trades men will soon be able to get their living, but men that lived by their Estates, that had Lands and Houses, to farm to Tenants cannot bring them, and many that Traded, and had considerable Sums of Mony due by them that are ruined, will be the greater Sufferers, unless some care be taken to procure them some imployment. It is the Condition of him that giveth this Relation, for the severity of that Government makes poor at best, and so together with the Priest Menaces for none to buy, and the Persecution so violent, no Protestants can bring any thing away.

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